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**THEOSOPHY AS THE BASIC UNITY  
OF NATIONAL LIFE**

# THEOSOPHY AS THE BASIC UNITY OF NATIONAL LIFE

*Being the four Convention Lectures delivered in  
Bombay at the Forty-ninth Anniversary of  
the Theosophical Society, December, 1924*

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LECTURE I

THE REAL AND THE UNREAL  
IN A NATION'S LIFE

By ANNIE BESANT, D.L.

FRIENDS :

You all know the title of these four lectures, the common title which covers the whole of them. We have made that title, "Theosophy as the Basic Unity of National Life," and the reason why we speak of that at this Convention is because at the present time in India there are so many divisions, so many difficulties, and some of us think that these divisions and difficulties arise from a want of understanding of the Realities and the unrealities in life, that the apparent cause of quarrel is often not the cause which really underlies the quarrel. For instance, the name of religion is used as the cause for the quarrel, while something else is the real cause of the struggle, and so constant difficulties arise, and no solution is found. Our wish, then, in these lectures, is to draw your attention to the real principles that underlie some of the problems that face us, and to try to get below the surface and to consider the Realities—relative



Realities—which lie beneath the surface. It is true, of course, that the words, the Real and the unreal, are not generally used in National life, but I shall so use them in part of what I want to say to you, in dealing with the Life-side, the Divine Life-side, and its material embodiment in the Nation. But there is also a more common meaning which is used in conversation, when you apply the word *real* to underlying principles, and word unrealities to illusions, and these illusions are often thought to involve those principles where really they do not involve them. It is then the task of endeavouring to clarify the thoughts of the public on the problems around them that we are essaying to accomplish in these four lectures. They will necessarily be imperfect, because the time of each is short for the large subject which is covered by it. But, none the less, we hope that we may give some assistance to enable the more thoughtful of you to work out the ideas for yourselves, and then so perhaps to translate them to the less thoroughly educated audience, where these deeper matters of thought are concerned, with which we are so largely concerned always in lectures given at one of our Conventions.

Look, then, at this idea that we are going to search under the surface to discover what lies beneath it, as to whether or not what we know as Theosophy can bring some help to the world which is so troubled. And in doing this, it may be well to start with some

definitions, so that you may at least know what I mean by the leading words that I am using—not that I want to force my own definition on any one of you. Take it as a hypothesis, if you will, but a hypothesis that will cover the whole of what I say. For, if you look at it in that way, then if you disagree, you will be able to formulate clearly the reasons for your disagreement, because disagreements are merely misunderstandings, and words used in different senses by the disputants give rise perhaps to lengthy controversies.

First of all, then, let me take a very fundamental word; we speak of “National Life”. What do we mean by a Nation? It is a word, as you know, very differently interpreted in different books on political science. Various things are said to be necessary for the existence of a Nation. Very often, you find, on examining those definitions, that they are by no means exclusive, and you find that people regarded as a Nation lack one or another of the things which are said to be necessary parts of its definition.

Now, there is one definition that I have given very, very often, on which my thought of the National Life is based, and that is: a Nation is what is sometimes called a biological individual. A biological individual means an entity, a separate being, who forms a distinct and a separate part, as far as the study of it goes, of a more complicated life. For instance, in

your bodies there are cells. From the biological standpoint, those cells in their simplest forms are capable of independent life. Some of them run about in your blood, others have got fixed into special shapes by the pressure of other cells on them. But the biologist, in dealing with the tissues of your body, will regard them as cells which have lost their power of external movement, because of their congregation, but are, none the less, distinct entities. They have special functions, and any disorder in their functions means illness of the body. And so you will find sometimes in books, which give a series of these biological individuals, a whole list beginning with the cell, and passing on to higher and higher congregations of these original entities, which are always very active in your bodies, called organs. The organs are individuals each discharging a particular function, and the development of the whole is said to be conditioned by the complexity of the parts which subserve a higher purpose than their own individual existence. Take your own body. When the life passes out of your body, that which was the binding force loses its hold on the various independent individuals in your body, and they all separate. You may remember in one of the Upanishats a very striking illustration is given, where it is said that the different parts of the body quarrelled as to which was the superior. The eye said that sight was the highest ; the ear said that hearing

was the highest ; and so on, one after another. Then Prāṇa, the Life, spoke and argued the matter, and said to the eye that a man can be blind, but still he lives ; and to the organ of hearing, that a man can be deaf, and yet he lives, and so on, to the different organs that had contested for the supremacy. Then it said : “ If Prāṇa, the Life, leave, none of you can perform your functions.” And then, “ like a great and powerful horse suddenly breaking his heel-ropes,” Prāṇa sprang up and began to leave the body, and all the organs cried : “ You are the greatest, for without you we cannot function.” This is a graphic way of putting the natural truth. It is the Life in every embodiment which has the necessary energy and expresses itself through the various organs. It is said elsewhere that, when Ātma desired to see, the eye was ; when Ātma desired to hear, the ear was ; when Ātma desired to think, the mind then followed ; showing, as later science has discovered, that an organ is created by Life, and not the Life by an organ, as people thought some forty or fifty years ago.

Now then, looking at the Nation as an individual made up of lower individuals, the people who compose the Nation, growing on into a higher individual, Humanity, the collective Humanity of our globe, how shall we define a Nation save in words that will be true of the individuals of lower biological value and

of those that are higher than man ? I submit to you the definition that a Nation, like any one of you, has for its life a portion of Īshvara, the Lord, the Ruler. You remember how in one of the luminous expositions of the becoming of the Universe, that Brahman contains everything, is all. Nirguṇa Brahman is the unmanifested and contains everything. Then, when a Universe is to be formed, there is that perpetual beginning of manifestation, and it is said that, when He manifests, everything is manifested after Him, and He is the Saguṇa Brahman, Brahman with qualities. He, we are told, is really the supreme Īshvara. What He did at the commencement of any particular Universe, was that He took to Himself as body the great Elements—in the older meaning of the word, the material which came forth from Him, and entering that, He became many, and that is defined as having nāma and rūpa, name and form ; so that the infinite variety that we see around us is really Īshvara, the Supreme, and all the varieties depend on the various combinations that are made up out of the endless aggregations of matter in which one or another may be clothed. It is the same with a Nation. A Nation is a fragment of Īshvara ; a portion of the qualities of the Ruler of our Universe. His Life is the One Life that exists, and all comes forth from that. The Nation is a fragment of Īshvara who takes to Himself, as the Ruler of the Universe

endless forms of which He is the Life, and we all exist in Him. He manifests Himself differently in many grades and in many varieties, in varied forms. In the mineral, He shows Himself as mere existence, cohesion, Saṭ. Going into the vegetable kingdom, He shows Himself first as feeling the response to an external touch. In man, He shows out His threefold qualities, Saṭ, Chiṭ, Ānaṇḍa, and in that we have a complete embodiment of Īshvara Himself, though in miniature, with all the possibilities of unfolding into that omnipotence, that omniscience, which is the characteristic of a Ruler of a particular universe. That is the Spirit in man; also the Spirit in the Sun, the Spirit in the highest Deva. For, is it not written that we do not love the Deva for the Deva's sake, but we love the Deva for the sake of the Self. The thought should be clearly grasped that a Nation is a portion of Īshvara, and the various races and divisions of races and the Nations are developed out of Him, in order that they may manifest more and more of the perfection of Him who gives them birth. For no one of them can image that totality which shines out from Īshvara Himself. One shows one form or power of mind and feeling, and one another. That which is called sometimes in the Jewish Kabala Adam Kadmon, is the totality of all the human forms in the Universe, and is a reflection of the Īshvara of that Universe.

Let us take the definition of a Nation as a fragment of Ishvara, embodying and gathering around it various feelings and thoughts, evolving various capacities and powers, wanted for a full manifestation of the National peculiarities. Then we find another thing in connection with this, that there are great Mother Races that give birth to daughter races, and that, by studying those, we find much illumination thrown on the varied developments of a single Mother Race. The great Āryan Race is a Mother Race. It is not a purely Theosophical idea, though it was put, I believe, first in my *Ancient Wisdom*, that the Mother Race is one who has within herself the seeds of the qualities which will be developed separately in her daughter races, the children of her life. And so in what are called the Indo-Āryans, you find that the Mother Race before it had left its birthplace, gave birth to four daughter races. Both Hindūism and Science are agreed that the birthplace, the cradle, of the Āryan Race was Central Asia, round that Sacred City whose name you know as Shamballa, where the four Great Kumāras live and reign over our world. If you want to image to yourself something of those Mighty Beings, turn to the *Chhandogyo-panishat*, and you will find how Nārada goes and learns from Sanaṭ Kumāra, what is the deepest truth of life. The Race multiplied mightily there, and sent forth four successive emigrations, and all the emigrations

went westwards. Two of those emigrations are the parents of the various Nations in Europe. They can be traced out one by one, though I have not the time to do it for the moment. But this you will remember, if you have taken an interest in the subject, that, just as you may trace the incarnations of an individual by his temperament, by the type of his mind, by the type of his feelings, by the combination of the two and by his actions promoted by both, so in a Nation you can find the National characteristics, National feelings, National activities governed by the National mind and the National emotions, and so is formed a certain type of National character. You will see how the daughter races, the children of the Āryan Mother, developed in the western climates into the Nations that we know to-day. You find in the first of those great emigrations that the people settled in Egypt, spreading along the shores of the Mediterranean. Taking Egypt as the type, what is it that strikes you most? It is the development of Science, not as you know the Science of to-day, studied by the concrete mind and climbing up to the higher principles that underlie the phenomena; but Science as it was in the great Egyptian Wisdom, known in the higher regions first and then worked out, as you work in mathematics, from certain great principles and axioms to their necessary implications. You will find in that Egyptian race an extraordinary strength of mind and amount of



regularity. If you look round and observe, you see that Nation reincarnated again after it perished. It is Rome that at once springs to your eyes as embodying very many of the Egyptian characteristics, for Rome was the very embodiment of Law and Order, and of the duty of each citizen to the State, the obligation that lay upon every member of the State that protected and helped him. After Rome perished, the next incarnation is in Britain, where you find the same qualities coming up, where law is so insisted upon, where the duty of the citizen is regarded as a thing to be done, and always within the law, respect for order and the orderly development of one thing from another. In those three Nations, you can catch an idea of the reincarnations through which a Nation passes. If you look at Greece, where would you see its embodiment in modern days save in the Keltic peoples who have inherited or reproduced her love of beauty, her love of art, her attempts to make all life beautiful and all manifestations beautiful in their turn. And so you may find in this the reasons for many of the conflicts of modern Nations, why the Englishman and the Irishman cannot get on together, why they tug at each other like two coupled hounds dragging away from each other, why there is perpetual quarrel. The reason in this case is that the one embodies the Keltic type and the other the Teutonic, and the emotions and the mind are at the root of their quarrel ;

for they can never understand each other, until they see the basic unity of the One Life, the explanation which would enable them to see the Real in each other, and the different developments as unrealities, aiding the evolution of the life.

Now, what is Theosophy ? It is Brahma Viḍyā ; it is only the Greek word instead of the Samskr̥t word. There you have both the Aparā and the Parā ; the Aparā includes all the knowledge which can pass from the mouth to the ear. The Parā is the knowledge of Him by whom all is known. It is from this that we gain in modern days the clear knowledge of the Real and the unreal, of the life of Īshvara veiled in many forms, illusory, productive of illusion ; and therefore one gradually tries to look on a Nation and on National movements, not blinded by the outer part of the movement, but seeing its inner Life, at the motive of those who start a movement, at the motive of those who carry it on. Look thus at the many movements going on around us, particularly perhaps at the Hindū-Muslim question to-day, a modern question, remember, and look at the Non-Co-operation Movement which swept India so mightily a few years ago. We want to see in these two not the warring elements outside. Those are the unrealities, the illusions, falsehoods, errors. There is never a great movement in a Nation which has not at its heart some profound truth. You see the husk of error and not the underlying truth.

But if you use the Theosophical method, which looks for the Unity of Life everywhere, the basic Unity, however much appearances may differ, then you will begin to understand these movements as they sway the people and then disappear. For, as the life in every one of us is divine, we shrink from falsehood, while we cling to truth, and it is that which attracts the heart. That which is the truth is the basic fact of the movement, and not the falsehood, which is its outer appearance. And so I would ask you to try to realise where is the truth and where is the error, where is the groping after the Real and where is the deception by the unreal, and to do it always with the knowledge and the faith in the old Samskr̥t saying : " Truth alone conquers, not falsehood." Falsehood falls to pieces, shatters itself into fragments. Truth is unity. The wrong ways are many. Many-branched is error, says the *Gītā*, but the Right Way is one. The right way is to seek and find the God hidden in each. The gropings of men in their religions, in their movements, social and political, are only the gropings of the infant who does not yet realise the world around and who is misled by the appearances.

Supposing you take, as a hypothesis, my definition of a Nation, you find one very striking thing with respect to the Nation here, in India. Naturally we shall begin to ask why. The age of India is going backward and backward with new discoveries. Only

comparatively the other day in Europe, she was met first trading with Babylon three thousand years ago. But quite lately, there have been discoveries made in Sindh and North-West Panjāb which force the European archæologists to throw India back by another two thousand years, and now they say India cannot be younger than five thousand years before the time of Christ. They will find other things presently and throw her further and further back ; but I do not think they will ever find her origin, for they must find out the ancient city of Shamballa, before they can tell where India had her youth. But the point on which I want to dwell is not the antiquity in that sense, but on the difficulties that it makes in the study of her history. She has no contemporaries. She has no admirers from whom we can learn their impressions of what she was. Those ancient civilisations are all dead. She traded with Babylon. Yes, but Babylon is buried. She traded two thousand years B.C. with Egypt. But the only trace is in the shrouds of her mummies. She traded with Palestine when Solomon is said to have built his temple, and that is shown by the Tamil names which you find in the Hebrew Scriptures, for the Hebrews themselves had no names for the exports from India. The Tamil names tell us whence they came. You may come down through centuries fast or slowly, and as you look, now and then you will come across her. You find her children in

Rome, Greece, Palestine, everywhere. All that you can say is that she was a mighty Nation, highly civilised, with wonderful manufactures, with enormous wealth, with great mineral treasures and jewels of every kind, with spice and ginger. All these things were exported to the other great cities of the past. Why have they all vanished, and why is India still here? I think it means that a Nation dies when its usefulness to Humanity is over, when it grows old and decayed and has no more gifts to give; and so one after another of those Nations have perished. When we, moderns, want to know about them, we unbury their sepulchres and marvel at the treasures which they contain, and we say that they must have been a mighty Nation, splendid carvers, great workers in gold and silver, and in many another material, and we admire and put the articles in our museums. But the Nation that produced them all is dead. Yet India, which was with them all, still remains. Why? If the other Nations have died, it is because they had given all they had to give, and so only their sepulchres are left. India still lives; she is still a great Nation. She has still great possibilities before her. That means that India has still some treasures to give to Humanity, and that Humanity cannot afford to let her die.

If you realise that at all, then your attitude to these questions will change, and looking at all the

questions and the problems and the quarrels, you will try to understand what each of them means.

Now, with regard to the Hindū-Muslim question, it is not a question of their religions. There are two great bridges between the great faiths. One is in their philosophy. There is no difference between the Hindū Advaita view and the metaphysical and philosophical thought of the great doctors of Islām of the eighth and the tenth centuries of the Christian era. You may take a passage from their writings, and you would not realise that it was not written in Samskr̥t. In the study of the metaphysic and subtlest philosophy in both Hindūism and Islām, the all-embracing power of the mind dared to grasp, or tried to grasp, the ultimates, but fell back silent, as the Upanishat has said ; that which they sought was beyond the reach of human intellect and human thought. As far as they go, they teach the same. As far as they go, they express it in the same way ; and if our Musalmān brethren in India would, as we have begged them to do, translate their own great works into some modern language in which they might be understood in Europe and in India, then they would find out that there is no quarrel between the Muslim and the Hindū in those higher ranges of thought, but that both are linked together by identical statements, and that the divisions come only among the unlearned, and not among the learned who deal with those basic problems.

The other great bridge is one, which, in many ways, is more readable and more intelligible to those versed in modern philosophy and metaphysic, and that is the Mysticism, the Yoga. I am well aware that Sūfism is looked on by the Musalmāns as heresy, but it is a heresy of Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet Himself, the founder of the Sūfī line of thinking, which is only the ancient line of Yoga : to find out the Divine Life by plunging into the depths of one's own divine nature. The same steps are given and the same ideas are expressed, for Mysticism is one in every religion, and the Roman Catholic who, you think, would differ from you so much, speaks of the Deification of man, man becoming God. For the Mystic, like the Scientist, listens to the voice of human experience, and human experience is based on the realisation of the different strata of our nature ; that leads us, after rejecting all else, the body, the feelings and the mind, apparently with nothing before us, to a gulf of non-being. The experience of every Mystic tells us that, if he be true to his great motto : " To Dare " as well as " To be Silent," he will tell you that he throws himself into that gulf of nescience, and he finds omniscience, Wisdom, and not nothingness. For Yoga—I have no time to go into details—is known to many a one in India and to many a one in the Musalmān countries, and they have no quarrel. What then is the problem now ?

At one time Bhāraṭavarsha had one religion, Hindūism, and it stamped itself deeply on the hearts of the people. Then the Lord Buḍḍha came, Himself a Hindū, and He gave His World-Teaching, and it spread far and wide, and Buḍḍhism ruled in many parts of India. Hindūs and Buḍḍhists lived side by side in peace, studying in the same Universities, each studying the Scriptures of the other, studying science and literature together, and the Vedas and the teachings of the Lord Buḍḍha were read and striven to be understood side by side. And then after a time, only a thousand years ago, the Musalmāns came and gradually after many invasions settled down in India, and brought what seemed to be a different conception of the relation of man to God. The differences you can easily explain, if you will read the teachings of the Prophet, who adapted the form of His teaching to the circumstances that He found, the essence ever being the same. You will then understand that what seem to be limitations in Islām are only limitations for a purpose and for a time. If you know history, you will know the unspeakable cruelty and vice and foulness of every kind into which the people had sunk, and out of which they were lifted by the Lord Muhammad. If you want to see the other side of Islām, go to Arabia and see its work in the University of Baghdad. The learning spread over the neighbouring countries. It brought the torch of



science to Europe and lit again the flame which had been extinguished in Egypt and in Greece. Remember how that flame spread over Europe and how it made possible the Renaissance, and then you will know what Europe owes to Islām, although it rejects the teaching of the Prophet and calls Him an impostor. We have to understand that all religions teach the same doctrines of Unity, and the religions will ultimately vindicate themselves.

But we have a problem with us. It is clear. But it is comparatively a modern problem. Now we are told with regard to India that there was a time when she was very great. In the days of Alfred, the different clans of England sent over one of the Bishops to one of the great Universities of India at the time, and he carried back the wonders of the land he saw, including various mineral riches of India. After Alfred the Good, we remember the Norman Conquest and there were the struggles with France to keep the lands which the Normans had held, and then there were plenty of wars, not only in England but also in Europe; then remember India is as large as Europe without Russia. I think there was more quarrelling in Europe than there was in India. The wars in Europe were far more prolonged and bitter. For the wars in India were just quarrels between rival Chiefs, and they did not injure to any great extent the masses of the people. The Kings

and armies fought out their own battles, and the portions of India where those wars were waged were still in a prosperous condition. Do you realise that no foreign Nation which contacted India found her anything but rich, learned, prosperous and contented? Those who travelled to India and came to her Universities for learning her wisdom, tell us what she was. If I had time, I would take the fourth, fifth and sixth centuries before the Christian era, when two great Chinese travellers came to India, and then Marco Polo in the twelfth century. I could take you on and on, until that terrible seventeenth century when the misery of India began.

Look at the movement that stimulates what you may call the mental and emotional nature of India against the present Government. It is very much of the same nature as was shown by your ancestors. If a King tried to be autocratic towards his people, they got rid of him very promptly, and they put his name in the law books, as a warning to the Kings that came after him. I have read of R̥shis who were staying on the borders of sacred rivers coming and rebuking the King, until he reformed his ways and did justice to the people. There was another remarkable way in small States, when R̥shis were not available, and that was to go away from the King, and leave him without subjects. You see a King

cannot do without his people, while a people can do without a King, and so you find in India sometimes, when a King was autocratic, all the population would pack up their goods and transfer themselves to another part of the land ; and then the King would go to them and beg them to come back, so that he could have people from whom he could draw his living. That is very much like the modern Non-Co-operation Movement. The essence of the Non-Co-operation Movement, apart from anything of the surface appearance, was the protest of an angry people against a Government they thought to be unjust, unfair and oppressive. This is what it meant. It meant : “ We will have nothing to do with you.” If every one had done it, it would have been magnificent, and that is where Gandhiji’s miscalculation came. The people did not care. They made a noise on the platforms. But if every Indian had taken part, no Government could have stood against a universal movement of that kind. But it was impossible. But that is no reason why we should not recognise some of the useful things it did. It made many young men sacrifice themselves for the country’s sake. It stirred them to a spirit of enthusiasm. It made them indifferent to personal loss, and they worked hard and energetically, and they tried to do their best. I opposed the movement right through. I opposed it as a statesman. It was impracticable and impossible,

and sure to lead to riots and disorder. We shall have to see the truth in it and also the illusion in it.

I have said the Hindū-Muslim problem is not due to the difference between the religions. We have had Musalmān Kings and we have had Hindū Kings, and both Hindūs and Muhammadans have lived peaceably under the Rulers. The Mahārāja of Kashmir, a Hindū, has a majority of Musalmān subjects. The Nizam of Hyderabad, a Musalmān, has a majority of Hindū subjects. Yet he was the first Monarch in India who took the Central Hindū College Text-Books of Religion and Morals, and ordered that they should be taught in the schools to His Hindū subjects, in order that they might know their religion. There is no essential quarrel except the quarrel for posts, franchises and privileges. The majority and the minority fought against each other, not because they differed in religion, but because they wanted to gain power. This is at the basis of the quarrel to-day. The quarrel is for power and posts. So many Musalmāns, so many Hindūs, so many votes in the legislative chambers, municipalities, everywhere. Is that religion, or is that only a material grasping for prizes which ambitious men desire, and by which poor men are deluded to believe that their religion is in danger? And there are only a few men who can profit by them, not the people.

That may seem a harsh thing to say. Examine it and see if it is not true. The true religious spirit does not tend to fight for material prizes. There is a saying: "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and to God the things that are God's." Render unto the State that with which the State is concerned. Render unto your higher nature the things that your religion teaches. These do not cause quarrelling. It is the worldly things, the unreal things, that set men to fight with each other.

And so we come to one great principle which is the last that I have to put to you. It is the question of the fundamental teaching of Hindūism carried to excess, and another principle carried to excess in the West. That is the reason why India and Britain were brought together. If you will ask me what is the great characteristic of Hindūism, not taking that admirable one given by the Founder of the Christian College in Madras, it is Dharma. Fundamentally, it means the result of the man's past. Every one admits that. It is the law of evolution by which he has evolved, and it is the point at which he is born into his new life-period. That marks out his place in the National life by his qualities. That is the law by which he will evolve in the present; by the best possible use he can make of the qualities which he has brought out of his past, and by following the law of evolution, he will reach the highest point possible for

him in the present life, and this will determine what he shall be in the future. That is a man's Dharma. You find in ancient India the idea of caste. Shri Kṛṣṇa says: "The four castes were emanated by Me, according to the different distribution of qualities and actions." The caste system was fundamentally a National system of social service, not of privilege, but of service. It is what is called, in modern days by the more intelligible term, perhaps, in the West, vocation. Now vocational education in the West means that since every child has certain qualities, a certain temperament, certain faculties, everything has to be done to develop those faculties to their utmost possibilities, and when he gets to a certain point where his qualities are very clearly and definitely shown, these should determine his walk in life. These are definitely the marks of his caste, his Dharma, his "calling," his vocation. The preparation for this is what is called vocational education, and you will find that educationists in Europe are in favour of that, provided they do not begin it too soon. Specialised education should not begin until a good sound foundation of general education has been given, so that all may be able to associate pleasantly in society by virtue of a common knowledge and a common training. It means that every man has his own place. It was all right in early days. Every person was born in his proper place in society. That is not the case now, and so there is the rebellion

against caste, because you do not find the qualities going with the vocation, which means a calling. Now you find a man, who has in him the germs of a poet, being set to look after the drains of a municipality, and you find a man, who has a possibility of great serviceableness to the Nation, sent out to work every day for many hours in a mill. The whole thing is confusion, social anarchy and social disorder. This is as much the case in the western countries as it is in India. The one advantage that caste has here, which class in the West has not, is that it has introduced a limited democracy within the caste. One who is a Brāhmaṇa is asked to dine with another Brāhmaṇa; they are of the same caste, and difference of social rank is immaterial.

The Nation must be organised. It must have vocations suited to the people. At present, square men are put into round holes. If a person has a certain rank, they think he can fit in anywhere. In England Lord Chelmsford was made the Lord of the Admiralty, because he was the man that suited their party. He was not chosen for his vocation. Hence the confusion. And it is so here also. The members of the Indian Civil Service can be a Councillor, a Head of any Department, can be appointed to any post in India. That really means the Civilian has not studied any one of them thoroughly, carefully. The real solution for this confusion will come, only

if we follow the old way. Study the qualities of the child and give him a good general education, and then give him a special education which will fit him for the work he can best do for the State. An Indian is born into a system of obligations. Therein is his duty, and according to his duty is his education. We must bring back the principle of the old system, and it will be possible if the Devas co-operate with men, as they did in the past, by guiding the incoming souls to appropriate bodies, but as they do not now. Until the time comes when the Devas will co-operate with men in all these matters, we must study the child, leave him free to show out his qualities, and give up the idea that it is the teacher's duty to pour his knowledge into the child. It is the child's right to question the teacher along the lines the child would like to learn eagerly and thoroughly. All these things affect our National life, and they have to be changed. It may help you to study Ruskin, who was one of the geniuses of England. He laid down the idea that a Nation must again organise itself according to the life-functions of the Nation. The Nation requires the discharge of certain functions by which it must live, and Ruskin said that the people should be organised to discharge those functions.

Now, the Englishman has gone mad over his rights, and the Indian has gone wrong over his obligations. The Indian has become too mindful of his obligations



without understanding the reason. The Englishman is too insistent on his rights, and cares very little for his obligations. They have been brought together to learn from each other. The one should recognise his duty, and the other should realise his rights in the State. Both are wanted, and if England was chosen to join hands with India, it was because she was the freest country available for that junction, and mutual inspiration. England had done so much for liberty. She had served it so well that the Little Island was the home of every rebel in Europe, when his own country was no longer safe for him. By that, she won her place in India. But, unfortunately, she first contacted her through her traders instead of through her statesmen, through those who came to get wealth, instead of those who should have come to give service; and so things have gone wrong, and we have to try to set them right, and to do that, we must study and learn. I am speaking to you to-day, because I have been studying history and trying to understand the Indian genius, and I want that India should live again in happiness, in prosperity and in freedom. That is the problem before the leaders of India to-day. We must prepare ourselves to live as a free Nation and to be worthy of the splendid history opening before us. We must put aside our prejudices, and be willing to meet in order that we may find our points of union more than our points of difference. I

hope that the possibility of union is opening before us to-day through Theosophy, the Divine Wisdom, which teaches us to look at the heart and not at the outer appearance, to look at the Divine Life and not at the outer material differences. Possibly, in that will be found the final solution of our many difficulties, and I hope that the method of application I have tried to open to you to-day will be carried on by those who succeed me on this platform.

## LECTURE II

### THE CITIZEN AS A DIVINE AGENT

By J. KRISHNAMURTI

FRIENDS :

An American barber said to me two years ago : “Please do not teach your religion of laziness to me.” I wondered then and I have been wondering since as to the reason why we Indians are reputed to be lazy, and why we are supposed to be lethargic and lacking in sufficient energy and sufficient desire to be active. It may perhaps be the climate or it may be our philosophy ; probably it is ourselves. But we cannot blame either our religion or the climate for our misfortune. If we look back thousands of years ago, when India was at its highest degree of evolution, when India was the flower of the world, when India was the jewel coveted by all, then we shall begin to see how and in what manner we have changed. Every schoolboy, every person, be he intelligent or otherwise, must ask himself why India has existed, has dragged on for so many thousands of

years, why she alone has existed as a single blossom growing on a tree, while the other blossoms have died and disappeared. There must be some reason, there must be some plan for which India has been allowed to continue as a race and as a people. If we look back to her history—Dr. Besant showed us clearly yesterday and gave sufficient proofs of the existence of India for at least ten thousand years—we find how India competed in her evolution, in her architecture, in her philosophy and in her industry with all the other Nations of the world of that period.

She traded with Babylon, Egypt, Greece and Rome ; while all the Nations who were her contemporaries have died, she alone lives. Every conqueror, from Alexander downwards, struggled and fought to have this precious jewel ; and every foreign Nation looked on India with envious eyes, as at some hidden jewel, knowing that once that jewel had been conquered, the world would lie at the feet of that particular Nation. If we ask these questions, we cannot possibly answer them, unless we turn away from the ordinary methods, from the ordinary thoughts, from the ordinary books, from the ordinary life and from the ordinary desires. We must seek the reason in other spheres. There must be some reason ; otherwise she would not exist to-day.

Those of us who are Indians—it does not matter whether we are Hindūs, Pārsis or Muhammadans—all

believe equally strongly in the idea of Divine Beings, in the idea of R̥shis or Masters. Knowing that and believing it sufficiently strongly, we are easily convinced that there is a plan for India, that to the realisation of this plan, the Great Beings—it does not matter by what name you call Them—in Their Power and in Their knowledge are guiding India, and that the future of India must lie before Them like an open book, for otherwise India would have perished long ago. What are the reasons? Dr. Besant told us yesterday that the civilisation of India was based fundamentally upon religious principles, and that India had something intrinsically great to give to the world. If we once admit that there is a plan—and we must admit that, even if it be but intellectually—by which the destinies of India are being guided, that the Devas of India are guiding this Nation along a particular channel, so that she can fulfil the desire of the Great Ones, then looked at from that point of view, we must ask ourselves: What is religion and what is philosophy?

Nowadays, spirituality is too often a matter of convenience to which we refer from platforms, or a thing that we profess when it happens to suit us. Spirituality to me is the realisation of all life, is the realisation of unity, of oneness; it does not matter whether you are Hindū, Musalmān or Pārsī, whether you are a stone or a tree, whether you are that

light or that sky or that bird. They are all fundamentally alike, though some of us might have grown in evolution by suffering, and have arrived at a stage when we are able to look at outside objects and judge them. A spiritual man who has realised this oneness must be capable of using that understanding in the practical things of daily life ; otherwise he will not grasp sufficiently strongly what is meant by spirituality. It must be carried out not only on the spiritual plane, the emotional and mental planes, but especially on the physical plane, for we are on the physical plane and we cannot possibly neglect it, and it is to that to which we owe our first duty.

Naturally each person will translate as he wishes our religion, which is sublime, and our philosophy, which begins where western philosophy ends. Our philosophy maintains all through its pages and volumes that there is One Life, that there is One Goal, though many people call them by different names ; and that religion is fundamentally strong, powerful and potential of all good. It is we who have turned that religion into something that makes us lazy. Perhaps that barber, who said that eastern religion is the apotheosis of laziness, had gained that opinion from the few Indians whom he had seen in America. I do not blame him, because he does not know anything better.

One reason why India has continued to live for so many thousands of years is that our Father, our King, our Lawgiver was a Divine Being. He was the embodiment of Divinity, and He was a true citizen of India ; and that was the great Vaivasvata Manu, from whom we derive all our political, economical and social instructions. We are all one to Him, because we live in India and we are Āryans, and as such we have but one duty, and that is Dharma. As with Pythagoras, to Him the State is above everything, above father and mother and wife and children. He would have us sacrifice everything for the sake of the State. Those of us who do not believe in Karma and Reincarnation must naturally wonder why He should have evolved a system which is known as caste. It can be easily answered ; it is not my original answer but it is a time-worn one. Evolution is based on reincarnation. There is no such thing as equality ; we can have equality of liberty ; but there is no such thing as equality of capacity in the people of the world. How can you otherwise explain why one person should be poor, lame, miserable, unhappy and weary, while another lives in a most luxurious condition so happy, easy-going, world-honoured and comfortable. The people who are comfortably off must have had some experience in the past, some karma which allows them to have an easy time now. These things

you know sufficiently well, and there is no need for me to preach in order to convert you. I do not know whether you practise it ; but that is quite a different thing.

The caste system is based on inequality, or in other words on vocational evolution. Man is intrinsically divine, but he has outer circumstances, an outer atmosphere to face, and each one is affected according to his temperament, according to his value. I need not go into details, for you know them far too well. In the plan of the Manu Vaivasvaṭa the caste system was based upon a flexible principle, so that the lowest could become the highest and the highest might become the lowest. There was no caste system held rigidly with prejudice, superstition and tradition. The son of a Ṛṣhi might be found among the lowest as well as the highest. It depended upon what kind of life he led. What held us together so long was religion, because without religion we are not united. If once you feel that you are united by religion, it does not matter whether you are united or not politically or economically. We were taught thousands of years ago by means of pilgrimages and by literature that India was one, whether the Indian came from the North or the South. We were all under one guidance, under one power, under one protection. Whether we had kings or republics or democracies, whatever was the nature of the



government, we were treated as one. India was one whether we were ruled by Hindūs, Pārsts or Muhammadans. The Rulers cared for the people and the people respected the Kings and loved them.

Then again by education—not the modern kind of education but the ancient education—we were taught about life, and we were instructed before we started out upon the pilgrimage of life what kind of attitude we should have, what kind of thought, what kind of mind, how we should treat our wife and children. We were taught dignity, for without dignity culture cannot be attained. We were taught self-respect, because without self-respect you cannot respect another and receive respect from him. It is only culture that can produce fastidiousness in little things. We were taught a culture that made us kind, that produced initiative, that made us think strongly instead of allowing our minds to die down. We were taught what was public opinion and how to obey it.

According to this glimpse of the past, we must consider ourselves as all divine beings, as really the agents of the R̥shis, and believe that we are intrinsically and essentially great. Whether we belong to a particular narrow caste or not, whether we label ourselves Theosophists, Muhammadans or Buddhists, or of any other religion, we are fundamentally the same. Though we may differ in our

exterior by putting on different clothes, by putting on different hats or turbans of different colours, there is no fundamental difference between us all. That is the first thing that every one of us should realise, whether he is an Englishman, Indian, German, or American, that we are all one.

Bearing that in mind, let us look at the present condition of India. We started from the greatest civilisation, from the flower of evolution ; look at the beauty of our architecture, the wealth of our literature, our philosophy ; everything that you see was noble and sublime. Now we can follow the course downwards degree by degree, year by year, till we reach the present stage. Perhaps having come back after eleven years' absence from India, one sees the conditions a little better than those who permanently remain in the same town, in the same street, in the same little building. It is not that I am denationalised ; some people nowadays, if you venture to differ from them, say : " My dear friend, you are denationalised, and you are no longer a true Hindū." I am afraid it is not true. I am as much a Hindū as any of you ; besides, it does not matter whether you are a Buddhist or a Muhammadan or a Christian, it is all the same. Because I want to see India achieve her glorious position once again, I may be perhaps strong in my language, and perhaps you will be kind enough to excuse me.

Let us take then, first of all, religion, and see what part it plays in life, remembering that we are all one, that we are agents of the Divine. The first symbol of religion is the Priest. He is the true interpreter, if there can be such a thing, of God. A priest should be the embodiment of Divinity, should be so cultured that he understands the temperament of the people, so learned that he can sympathise with the unlearned, so magnificent that he can embrace the insignificant, so glorious that he can kiss the feet of the inglorious.

The second symbol is the Temple. The temple should be the centre of culture, of enthusiasm and of affection. The temple should be the abode of tranquillity and of true happiness. The temple is the place to which we should resort in our moments of misery and sorrow. The temple is the place where we should go for shelter, like the bird that goes to a tree where is its nest, or like a weary traveller who travels all day in the hot sun and seeks shelter in the shade of a valley. To us all, the temple should be a haven that gives peace, that gives tranquillity and that inspires us.

Bearing that in mind, let us look at the present condition of the priests and temples in India.

Two years ago I was in Benares, and visited one of its most famous shrines, where tens of thousands of pilgrims go every year. I am sure many of you have been there, and yet what comfort does it give us,

what salvation does it offer us ? None. The squalor, the noise, the yelling of people, the priest who comes and asks for a little money, the filth and the appalling degradation of what is the noblest thing in life, this is that temple now. We see beggars lined up on both sides leading to the temple, and we go there to worship the greatest, the most sublime thing in the world. One comes away rather nauseated, depressed, wishing that the world did not exist, wishing that the priests were not there, wishing that if they did nothing else they would at least keep the temple clean. Do you know how many temples in Southern India own palm-groves, and those groves are rented for the making of toddy ? Is it in keeping with a spiritual ideal to make money out of the ruin of the people ?

Then again, look at the priest, I was at a funeral the other day, at a cremation. Really it was one of the most appalling and pitiable of sights. There was a person lying down on the floor dead, a body finished, his ego or soul gone away, and there were thirty or forty priests saying prayers, mantrams and so on, and yet they were all more concerned about the money, how much they were going to get, than with what they were saying. I saw a big bag containing money, and the priests were asking for three or four rupees more before they were induced to go on with the ceremonies. This happens just as much in the West, only it is done there privately and behind the altar.

You make financial arrangements, but not so blatantly perhaps. Whereas in India it is all done in the open, the dead person lying in front and the priest asking for a little more money before he can bury the man, or rather burn the dead body. And yet that is the priest who is the interpreter of God !

What are we doing, we who are, after all, the citizens, who are the representatives of God ? What can we do ? Nothing. We go to these temples. When we die, our son invites all the priests and spends money. It is as expensive to die nowadays as it is to live. It is as expensive to get married. It is all so ludicrous, so small and so petty. I do not say that we should not have ceremonies, but ceremonies should be simplified, should be made so that all the people can understand what is being done, and not so many thousands of words repeated per minute. What a degradation of what was once a pure religion, a pure priest. Look at the superstitions, the customs, the innumerable little appendages that we have created for ourselves to tie up our souls and our bodies. And yet we are divine beings struggling to get near the Divine, near the Greatest, near the Supreme. We put these little stumbling blocks specially created by ourselves to see if we are strong enough to climb over them. We remain at the first stumbling block for centuries, till somebody comes and pushes us from behind. That is religion at the

present day. I do not want to go into all the minute little details. The prayers, morning, afternoon and evening, that we offer, are all over in ten minutes without our even knowing what they mean. All this leads us to scepticism, making us materialistic, and drives us further away from our goal.

You and I are responsible ; not the priest, not the temple. If you desired to have a clean temple and a clean priest, you would take care to see that they *were* clean. It is our laziness in practice which was noted by my American barber friend which is responsible.

Then let us turn to politics. I know that is a dangerous subject, and I am not going to enter into it at length, because I do not know the political situation sufficiently well. But it is very convenient nowadays, as it happened in Ireland, to abuse the the Government ; it does not matter with what, and lay all our troubles, family, religious, economic, and everything on the Government. I do not say—far from it—that the British Government is not culpable, that the English people as a Nation have not done a great harm to India which England will have to pay for some day. Her karma is great and our pity for her should be greater. But we cannot blame the British for everything, and say that the death-rate, the birth-rate, child-marriage and every other evil is the fault of Great Britain. Ireland is now discovering, after she has got Home Rule and become a Free

State, that what matters is character, strength to stand up by yourself, and not to throw all your burdens on to somebody else and be slack yourself. That is slowly dawning upon her and we also must gradually realise it for ourselves.

Politically we must be great, we *shall* be great, because we have religion, because we are soaked in religion. We shall understand far better what politics is than anybody else in the world, because we start from the source where all things, animate and inanimate, proceed, the Divine in man, and we shall consider what is best for the people as a whole and not for one particular little individual. I shall not deal much with politics, because as I said at the beginning, I do not know about the various parties, various quarrels and so on. But I do know that we must realise that character matters much more than getting votes, and that if we do not have character we shall have chaos, and that we cannot postpone building up character every moment of the day, even though we may not have Swarāj. If we wait for every good thing in life till we get Swarāj, we shall go hungry. Why do we not wait for our meals till we get Swarāj? Why do we not sit awake till we get Swarāj? We do not realise that what matters is that we should have character, sufficiently strong, sufficiently well developed, sufficiently powerful, to stand up against everybody. That is where we are lacking.

Then let us turn to the educational system. I know a little bit about that because I like that subject. Without proper education you cannot be a true citizen, a true agent of the Divine Being. And now let us look at the education that we get and under what circumstances. The average ambition of a boy in India is to pass some stupid little examination, to become B.A. or even failed Matric.—“ F.M.,” as they put it after their names ; and after he has passed this examination, which has no value whatever for the character, he comes out of college with magnificent ideas all learnt from books, knowing nothing of what life is. Then he learns how useless he is, and that is the calamity. Then he gets bitter, then he gets wrong political ideas, and wants to do anything against some white man.

Education should be like a germ that kindles, that glows, that slowly matures the student into a perfect being. We all know what is wrong and yet we do nothing for it. I could tell you, and you know them, many examples of what happens in education, what starvation there is now of the real emotions, what lack of that true education which makes boys and girls into proper citizens, self-respecting, dignified and knowing life. What happens nowadays is that they are married even before they are out of college, and by the time the boy has left college he has probably got two or three children, and then he



is burdened for the rest of his life. I am putting it purposely in an exaggerated form, because otherwise we do not seem awake to these things. Do you see how scandalous this is? How is a boy, so handicapped, to know what life is? How many of you are handicapped or were handicapped? And yet you allow your children to grow in the same way. Even if you have had no true education yourselves, I do not see why you do not give it to others who will follow in your footsteps. Mind you, this again is laziness, the inherent capacity not to think unless it is forced upon us. There are few people who think, because of the lack of true education. Look at the buildings that we put up for education. No fresh air, hot, stuffy, criminal! I could get so furious with myself and equally with you for the things that go on outside around us. And yet what do we do? We must realise that we are divine agents, that life can be diminished by us or else made more noble. If we realise that, then we shall find means of destroying all these superstitions in education and in everything else.

I do not want to go into education too deeply, because I do not think half of us realise what it means. It is no use explaining from a platform. You must open your eyes. You must be able to think, you must have the capacity to feel for it; and till you do that you are not a proper citizen. You are one of those who live in a top storey and throw out

water from a topmost window on the passer-by without any consideration. It is that consideration which is so lacking in each one of us. That is the fault of education, not your fault, not my fault. Do you think that if we were brought up from our boyhood and told to take care what we did and how we did it because it affected other people, whether they be brown, black, or any other colour, do you think we should not then have more consideration and affection for others? And yet after this lecture is over, after all the reading we have done, we shall send our children to the same old schools, because we do not feel sufficiently strongly about what matters in life. All that you are worrying about is when you will get your next meal when you are hungry, and you leave the rest to karma, very conveniently and very uselessly sometimes.

After education let us look at the cultural side of our life. Culture should be the heritage of every individual. As a Nation we Indians are intrinsically cultured. Though we may often lack some of those manners, some of those little things that give culture perfection, in our hearts we have that culture which creates kindness, for without kindness you cannot be a cultured person. You may have polished manners, a fine exterior, a smooth tongue and so on, and not be really cultured; but the moment you have kindness and affection, then you are a truly cultured person.

Culture only comes in its perfect form when we have the capacity to think of others. In India any deficiency is put down to the lack of self-government, not to the lack of our own self-control, not to our own selfishness. We have forgotten to think what it feels like to have water thrown at us from a top window. We show the same forgetfulness every day when we spit on the floor, in the streets, without thinking that there are so many bare feet walking, and yet we continue to do it. That is where culture fails, when we have not the capacity to think of another. You may be able to quote Shakespeare, Milton and all the great authors of England and of India, and yet if you do a little unkind thing like that, you are a coarse person and no amount of reading or meditation will ever make you more divine. That is why we must turn to education. That is why we must make our whole life constantly educated. We must train ourselves again, because we have gone so far away from where we started. We have reached the bottom depth of misery and must now begin slowly to climb. Whether India can last or not depends on whether our supreme standard of Divinity can be maintained or not.

Civilisation is crushed when the people are not able to maintain ordinary standards of culture, of ordinary responsibility, of ordinary Dharma. We have come now to a stage when we must question

ourselves, whether we are a B.A. or failed Matric., or a pandit or a priest or a professor in a class or a scavenger, whether we possess the standard of culture which is born, not out of a superficial veneer of education, but from a deep-seated sense of duty and responsibility. I wonder how many of us can honestly say that we are cultured in the real sense of the word. I am afraid very few. On those few lies the responsibility of making India again what she was, the Mother of all Nations.

A true citizen, a divine agent, must have the capacity, the desire and the will-power, to restrain himself in everything for the harmony of all. You see what that means. It means that we must consider every little action, every little thought, every little movement that we make, because those of us who are capable of thinking, who are capable of feeling, must restrain ourselves in all our actions, so that we produce in the outer world a harmony which does not exist at present. In other words, private liberty ceases when public injury begins.

We know these things, we have read them in our books time out of number, and yet they have remained only a theory. What matters in India at the present period is that each one of us should change and recognise the true Divinity in each, and not merely say prayers in the morning. In other words, we have to create a new society, a society of

spirituality. Those of us who are cultured, in the true sense of the word, should get together and find out ways and means to spread the knowledge we have gained, however small it may be.

Finally we should live dangerously—dangerously for ourselves that is, and not for others. That means we should be discontented. A divine discontent should be born in us, and it should keep us alive and not sleeping. The most worthless citizen is he who sits in his arm-chair and lives complacently. But we must think, and think dangerously. Until we have achieved that, we shall not be true agents of the Divine Being. Discontentment produces sorrow, produces uncomfortable feelings in us, so that we must get satisfaction before we proceed to the next stage. To be really satisfied means that every one around us should be happy, should feel divine happiness. The enlightened Buddha is he who feels for others, who thinks for others, is not satisfied with his own self. That is what is meant by divine satisfaction.

It is very difficult to put into one word what a citizen is. If you have understood what I have been trying to explain, though badly I admit, you will feel that there is one thing for us to do ; each one of us, however humble, however incapable he be, should keep himself active, and struggle to produce better conditions and not to allow superstition to exist, to

drag us down. If you have done that, you will have become a true agent of the Great Being, a true citizen, worthy of the greatest citizen, Manu Himself.

You and I can feel that we have power to transform the world, because we belong to India and India has got something which the world needs.

# LECTURE III

## BROTHERHOOD AS A REALITY

BY THE LADY EMILY LUTYENS

FRIENDS :

There are many organisations in the world to-day which profess brotherhood, but you will generally find that in every one of them there are certain limitations and they do not include, as do the members of the Theosophical Society, brotherhood without distinction of creed or class or sect or colour. Also for the main part, these organisations are looking forward to the realisation of brotherhood as a hope for the future, for that time when "men shall brothers be," but to the Theosophist brotherhood is a fact in nature, a natural law from which there is no escape, because to the Theosophist brotherhood is the reflection on the physical plane of the eternal Unity. Philosophy and metaphysics may speculate upon that unity but brotherhood is its practical application down here on the physical plane, for it follows that if God is all, then everything in the Universe must be God

in the process of unfolding. As was once very beautifully expressed by a Sūfī mystic : “ God sleeps in the mineral, dreams in the vegetable, wakes to consciousness in the animal, to self-consciousness in the man and will awake to divine consciousness in the man made perfect.” In that simple but beautiful utterance you have the whole scheme of evolution.

Now, two things follow from this realisation of universal brotherhood, and the first is the understanding of what true brotherhood means and the second, that brotherhood being a natural law you cannot break it but you may disregard it and in the disregarding you will have to suffer.

For the most part in those other organisations which speak of brotherhood they think of brotherhood as implying equality, but, rightly understood, brotherhood means exactly the opposite, it means inequality. You will never find a human family where all the children are the same age at the same time. It is quite impossible. Brotherhood therefore implies the existence of elders and youngers in the great family, and the first consideration for every one of us is to find out what is our own particular place in that family, where we individually stand. Each man born into this world has his own note to sound in the eternal Harmony, his own path to make according to his word, but it must be his own word and not the word of another, and the sounding of that word is the



first duty of every human being. Within the limits of your kârmic obligations you must never deviate from the path of duty which is the sounding of that word, of the note which has been given to you.

Now, how are you to determine whether you are among the youngers or the elders in the great family ? There is one very simple way. It has been said that only the weak have rights, the strong have only obligations, and you can test your own place in evolution by asking yourself which is it that means most to you, the acquisition of rights or the fulfilment of obligations ; are you among the servers of humanity or are you amongst those who are only a drag upon the wheel ? And that is a question which every one has to ask and to answer for himself. The mark of greatness is the power to react greatly to circumstances—a weak man is overwhelmed by circumstances, a strong man is the man who can dominate his circumstances whatever they may be.

The second fact which proceeds from the right understanding of brotherhood is the realisation, that if you disregard it, then you will perish in the disregarding. Mr. Krishnamurti in his lecture yesterday said that civilisations perish when culture ceases to be the possession of all members of the community, when it is no longer within reach of what we call the common people. I would like to express the same idea in another way and to say that civilisations perish

when they deny brotherhood. It has been said that the tears of the poor and the miserable undermine the thrones of kings, and it is the tears of the poor and the miserable that undermined every civilisation of the past, and if we are not very careful, it is those same tears which will undermine the civilisation of the present time, because that civilisation has been built upon the denial of brotherhood, in other words, it has been built up by the exploitation of the weak by the strong. What would you think of a human family if the hardest tasks were exacted of the baby and those who were the elders of the family gave themselves an easy time? Exactly the contrary takes place; if food is short, if there is danger, it is the helpless one, the baby, who is first thought of, and those who are the elders and can fend for themselves see that the younger and the weaker are protected. But we have built up a civilisation on exactly the opposite plan, and as I shall try to show you, we have built that civilisation upon the woes of the weak and, as Nations, we are paying the penalty of that denial of brotherhood.

Let me illustrate my meaning by concrete examples. At first I will deal with the child, for the children of a Nation are the weakest members of it, and I maintain that every child born into every Nation has got certain fundamental rights and that unless we recognise those rights, we as Nations shall

never rise to the height of our possibilities. Ruskin has said that the only wealth is life and the greatest wealth of any Nation is its children. The first right of every child is *life* and you would imagine that nobody would question that right, yet look at the statistics of infant mortality in every so-called civilised country. I will not give you figures but I will tell you in a pictorial form what was found to be the condition in England during the War, when a greater degree of attention became concentrated on child welfare and child life, and there it was found that the death-rate of children was so high that whereas a soldier in the most dangerous part of the battle-field in France perished within a given time, three babies under a year old died during that same time in England, so that it was very rightly said that it was more dangerous to be a baby in England than a soldier on the battle-fields. It is true that Christ said: "Suffer the little children to come unto Me," but I hardly think He meant anyone to interpret that statement to mean "send all the children born into this world, as quickly as possible, out of it," and England is not the country where the death-rate is at its highest.

The second right of every child is *health*. If the infant mortality is so great, you can judge for yourselves what the survival rate must be, and the number of those who will never grow up into healthy men and

women, who are crippled at their birth by the circumstances into which they are born. It was a great shock in England when the War broke out and recruits came forward to offer themselves for military service, and so many had to be rejected on the score of ill-health. I think that was the first time that the conscience of the Nation was aroused to the conditions under which so many members of the community have to exist, conditions which make it impossible for every child that is born to grow up into manhood or womanhood as the case may be, fitted in every way to realise their fullest possibilities. To achieve this end there follows the right to food and clothing. Proper food given in early youth is essential in order that the body may be built on strong foundations. When compulsory education was first introduced into England, it was found that many of the children who attended the elementary schools were unable to profit by the education given because they were in a half-starved condition, they were so hungry that they could not take in the lessons that were presented to them. That has now been remedied, and where the parents are not able to afford a good meal for the children, they are fed at school. We are beginning to wake up to that right of a child, namely, food.

Another right is education. That also is the right of every single child born into any Nation. I have no time to go into the very fascinating bypath as to

what true education means. I can only say that every child has a right to the best, the best education should not be reserved for certain classes of the community but the best should be given to every child. Only one point further I would stress and that is that the element of fear should be removed from every branch of education. The New Psychology has shown us that fear, experienced in childhood, leaves a scar upon the whole nature which can never be wholly irradiated in later life. Fear has been too much the characteristic of the education of children in every country.

Another right I would claim for all children is international protection. In wars, or industrial strife, it is the children, who, although entirely innocent, are yet the first to suffer. Some international legislation should be devised whereby the children's food is secured without prejudice to the cause of either party in an industrial or National dispute.

I take as my next example those who are called criminals, children, really, in another sense of the word. What is it that distinguishes children from grown-up people? It is a greater amount of selfishness and a love of destruction, and those two characteristics mark what are so often called criminals. It would seem obvious that the treatment of criminals should be educative and reformatory, rather than

punitive. And yet, the whole of our present system, practically in every country, is designed to hurt, to injure, to punish, and to make of the occasional criminal an habitual criminal. It is a well known fact that any young man who gets into prison, perhaps for a very minor offence, comes out of it worse than when he went in, and that is largely because we have got the wrong attitude towards these younger brothers of ours. Surely, the great ideal should be to turn the criminal into a good citizen. That is not at all what the average people who deal with criminals attempt to realise. Rather, they want to induce in the criminal what is called a consciousness of sin ; in other words, they want to see them humiliated before the so-called good. Here I would like to tell you of an incident with regard to my own sister who was three times imprisoned during the course of the suffragette agitation in England. She was one of the gentlest and kindest and most loving of human beings. When she came out of prison, after the first month she had spent in Holloway Gaol, she said : " I have learnt something in prison which, I thought, I should never learn in all my life ; I have learnt to hate." It was not her gaolers that she hated, it was the prison chaplain ; and she had learnt to hate him because he was placed in that gaol to be what Mr. Krishnamurti spoke of yesterday as the interpreter of God in that place of suffering. Yet he did not stand beside the

criminal in sympathy or love, but rather he stood apart from him, and left his humanity at the gates of the gaol. We want to make prisons everywhere into places where humanity is encouraged, rather than into places which are nothing but machines to grind out pain.

Then, in every country there are what are called the depressed classes. You may call them the depressed classes, the outcasts, in India, but in every country we have the same problem—the problem of those whom we condemn to live in slums, in places where no human being ought ever to be asked to dwell. Look at the slums of every great city in every so-called civilised country. Would you want your own brother, whom you love, to live under the conditions into which you condemn so many hundreds of your fellow-beings to live? What chance have the children born in the slums ever to grow into the manhood which they were intended to realise? And again, by our evil social systems, we condemn men and women to degrading work. If it be true that that kind of work has to be done, then, at any rate, we ought to give them every compensation possible, that is to say, the hours of labour should be shortened, as that labour is harder and more degrading. What happens at the present time? All that makes for beauty, for joy, for culture, is considered as of right to belong to the leisured classes, to those who already have got more than

enough of the good things of life; and inferior music, inferior paintings, inferior amusements are considered quite good enough for those who, because their lives are spent in drudgery and degradation, ought to have the best that every Nation can produce. And we are punished by our neglect, by our tolerance of these inhuman conditions, because it is from the slums that epidemics and pestilences spring, and they know no barrier of class or of wealth. Diseases which start in the slums are apt to sweep through a town, and to lay low the children of rich and poor alike.

It is sometimes said that you cannot change the social conditions. Those who believe in Socialism are told that, if they could put their ideas into practice, it would lead to the destruction of civilisation. Do we dare to say that there is anything that cannot be done, when a Nation wills it? If in England, for instance, in the year 1913, somebody had got up and proposed that we should spend so many millions of pounds a day, that we should raise an army of volunteers of over four millions, he would have been regarded as a madman. And yet, when the need of the Nation was great enough, that miracle was accomplished, and accomplished within a very few months. During those years of war, every man in the Nation was wanted. He was suddenly told that he was a hero, that his country needed him,



which it had never done before. There was work for every man, though, unfortunately, it was only the work of destruction. There was food for every man, woman and child in the country, because the Government rationed the National food, so that there was equality in division ; the rich could not eat too much, and therefore the poor had enough to eat. And now that the War is over, what has happened ? All those men who were heroes during those years are not wanted any longer. Men covered with medals now sit in the streets and beg for food. If you look at the long queues of people waiting at the labour bureaux asking for work, you will find amongst them veterans of the battle-field, and if war were declared to-morrow, every one of those men would once again become a hero, and his country would need him. Therefore, do not say that it is impossible. When there is the *will* to change the social conditions, then the way will be found.

I want next to speak to you about the condition of women, because I think that, next to children, women have been the most exploited class in the whole of the community in every country. Advantage has been taken of their weakness everywhere. They have been exploited in the home, exploited in the factory, exploited in our social system. First of all with regard to the home : there woman is the drudge in the great masses of the homes of every country. The

wife, in many cases, is only an unpaid servant, and works a great deal harder than any paid servant would ever do. When I say that, I know that the greater part of my audience are men. Now, I have heard many women who wanted to be men, but I do not think I have heard a single man who wanted to be a woman, and I do not blame them. But I would like just to remind you that, if the Law of Reincarnation be true, you may all be women in your next life. Then I hope that you will suffer as you have made women suffer now. Take the life of the ordinary working woman in an English city. I can only speak of that of which I have experience. She is the first to be up in the morning. She has to prepare the breakfast for her husband before he goes out to work. She lights the fire, makes the tea, sees that her husband is comfortable and well fed and that he gets off to his work ; and then, when the husband is gone, the children begin, and she has to get the children's breakfast before they go to school, wash them, dress them and feed them, and send them to school. When the older children have gone, she has got to attend to the baby, and there is always a baby. Then, when the baby is attended to, she has got to clean the room, and, perhaps, she will have a little time in which to attend to herself, but it will not be very long. Very soon, the children begin to come back from school, and as soon as they have

been fed and attended to the husband comes back also. When she has given him his supper, he generally goes out to the public-house to enjoy himself, and she is left at home to do the cleaning, and to put the children to bed, and, perhaps, to be waked up by the husband who will come back probably drunk and kick her. So it goes on, and every year probably she will become a mother. I ask you, is that the life which any human being should live—a life of drudgery and toil, from morning to night, year after year? And here I will also say that there is no crime in the world so great as the crime of enforced motherhood, and it is a crime which we commit every day, and allow to be committed. It should be the inalienable right of every single woman to decide for herself when she wishes to become a mother. Motherhood should not be imposed upon her, as is the case at the present time. I have drawn you a picture of daily drudgery, and I want you to realise that, on the top of all that daily work, continued year after year, she has to bear the children of the Nation. What chance have these children, born of a mother too tired and too ill to give them healthy physical bodies, born of a father too selfish to have any consideration for his wife?

And what about child-marriage? girls who become mothers before they have ceased to be children?

That is one of the teachings of the New Age, that women have the right to their own life, to their own person. It has never been thought that a woman has a right to live any life outside the circle of the home. I have noticed how men of every Nation talk about "our women". I have heard Englishmen say that they cannot mix on equal terms with Indians because Indians, as they say, do not allow *us* to see *their* women and yet they expect to see *ours*. By what right do men refer to women in this way? Surely they belong to themselves and not to any men of any Nation, and some day perhaps they will fully realise that right, they are realising it everywhere I am glad to say, and it is very often one of the causes of friction at the present time. Men think that they have the right to work, they have the right to lead whatever kind of life they like but the women's place, as they say, is the home and that means, an unpaid servant. But women are beginning to wake up and to realise that they too have got a right to express that note which it is their duty to sound in the great Harmony.

I now turn to women in industry and you will find how there also they have been exploited. It is one of the claims that women make that they shall have equal pay for equal work. That claim is denied to them. All kinds of excuses are made and the trade unions of men are suffering now for their lack of

brotherhood where women were concerned. They would not allow women into their trade unions, they encouraged the employers to give women a lower wage than they gave to men, and what is the result? Men are being turned away because employers have found that they can get more work out of women at much cheaper rates. When all the men went off to the War, in England women took their places. It was promised to the men that they should have their places when they came back, but the employers discovered in the interval that the women did double the amount of work that the men did and they could get them for only half the men's wage, and therefore when the men came back to ask for their places they were told that the women could not now be turned away. That is the working of the Law of Karma, very rightly. Men would not stand by women when women came first into industry, and now women are turning them out of their own jobs. And do you realise what harm comes to any Nation from the fact that so many women are being driven into industry, driven into work which is ruining their health and therefore the health of the coming generations? A very interesting fact came out recently in a comparison that was made between the town of Bradford where, as you know, there is one of the best schemes of child welfare that has ever been instituted in any country, and some place in Ireland where there was no child-welfare, no care of the child

in the ordinary way, where nobody thought of hygiene or sanitation, and yet the population of Bradford is dying out while in Ireland the children live and flourish. Why? Because the mothers were able to stay at home and nurse their children when they were young, instead of going into factories as they did in Bradford. I believe that the solution of this problem will in future lie in giving pensions to mothers. I cannot spend any time on that now, but I think the State will some day recognise that the highest profession is motherhood, and that a mother has a right to claim from the State provision for her children.

I want to speak of yet another aspect of this exploitation of women, women who are exploited beyond all others in our social system, those women who are condemned to a life of what we call shame and degradation because of our attitude towards this particular social problem. And I want to ask you all this question, whether you are men or women. It is a question I know that is not often put in public, but I am speaking to you of the reality of brotherhood, and I cannot leave such a problem as that untouched, and I would therefore ask you all the first fundamental question: Is it necessary for the well-being of the community, for the sanctity of the home, for the preservation of the race, that a class of women in every country should be condemned to perpetual

degradation and shame ? There are many people who will answer : “ Yes, it is necessary.” They believe it. If you believe it, then you must follow it to its logical conclusion. Then, instead of being the most degraded members of the community they should be the most highly honoured. Further, if you really believe that it is necessary that women should be sacrificed to this end, are you, who are women, prepared to make that sacrifice yourselves ? Are you, who are men, prepared to sacrifice the women who are most dear to you to the lusts of other men ? Is there one of you who would say “ Yes ” to that question and if not, why should you sacrifice the sisters and the daughters and the wives of other men if not your own ? And if you are women, why should you allow the honour of the other women who are your sisters to be sacrificed when you are not prepared to share in that sacrifice ? But if your answer is : “ No, it is not necessary,” then what are you doing for those women who are being sacrificed ? What are you doing to help them and to raise them and, above all, what are you doing to change the economic system which drives them to that necessity ? For, remember that the question of prostitution is very largely an economic question. A very exhaustive enquiry has been made into this problem, and the conclusion arrived at is that in practically every case women are driven into that life by economic necessity. Think for a moment, as I

said before, what is the position of women in industry. Hundreds of them do not get a living wage ; thousands of them have to earn a living in a life of drudgery and daily toil ; and then remember that there is always that other road open to every woman, always a temptation held out, namely, that if she is ready to go along that particular path of degradation, then she will have an easier time, then she will have a larger wage, and women are very often driven by sheer necessity to start on that life which leads down into the depth, and every single man and woman that tolerates this system is responsible for the degradation of those women, and it is a degradation in which we all must share. And again we are punished for our own crimes, for our denial of brotherhood, for it is from this pernicious system, from the degradation of women, that there springs the most terrible of all diseases which is decimating mankind at the present time.

And now I want to speak just a few words about those who are even more helpless than any of the classes that I have touched upon. I mean our brothers in the animal kingdom. When we recognise the brotherhood of humanity, when we recognise that brotherhood because we are all sharers in the Divine Life, we must also recognise our unity with all the lower kingdoms of nature. And here again there is not time to go into all the various aspects of our duty



towards that lower kingdom, but I will just speak of three things, vivisection, food and sport. It comes down to one very simple principle. Have we, any of us, got the right to gain life or health or amusement at the expense of those who are so far weaker than ourselves? Do we believe that it is necessary to life to partake of animal food? Do we again believe that we have the right to sacrifice those animals for our health? We know that it is not necessary, that animals are not sacrificed for the health of the human world but they are sacrificed for the greed of the world. Take again the question of vivisection and all those systems of medicine that arise as the result of vivisection. It may be for the experts to determine whether life can be derived from those methods of treatment. With that I have nothing to do, but I take my stand upon the simple principle that even if health can be acquired by the results of vivisection, we have no right to that life if it is gained by cruelty and the torture of those helpless ones who are our brothers, only less evolved. If to the weak there belong only rights and to the strong only responsibilities and duties, surely there is no greater denial of brotherhood than to try and win life and health at the expense of those who are helpless in our hands.

Friends, I have only touched upon a few of the great problems which confront us all in every civilisation, in every country, in every community. It would

be possible to talk for many hours of many more problems, and show you how in every detail of the life of our so-called civilised Nations we are denying brotherhood by our lives, even when we have it on our lips. And from the realisation of brotherhood, we come to understand that we are standing in a world where, after all, everything is yourself. If you injure another, sooner or later, you will have to pay for that injury, because in injuring another, you injure yourself ; there is no escaping from the eternal Law. And I cannot express this truth to you in more beautiful words than those of your own great scientist, Sir J. C. Bose who, in a recent lecture to the Punjab University, expressed this ideal of brotherhood in the following terms :

“ Is there anything which I can exclusively claim as my own, which is not also thine ? Are we not wholly dependent on each other ? Let us learn, therefore, to think not so much from the standpoint of ‘ I,’ but of ‘ we,’ and remove all ignorance which regards anything we gain as gain which has to be purchased at another’s loss. For infinitely more potent in comparison are mutual help and co-operation in the scheme of life.”

There is only one heresy in the world, and it is the heresy of separateness, the belief that you can stand apart from your brothers in a world, where all are one. There is only one fundamental sin, and that is

the sin of selfishness, the desire to keep and to hold something for yourself which belongs to the great Whole ; and if you will think of every category of crime, misdemeanour or sin, you will find that you can trace them all back to that one fundamental wrong, the sin of selfishness. Do you fancy that in the world you have an enemy ? It is an illusion. You alone have forged the only weapon which can ever injure you. What you love in others is only the reflection of your own Divinity ; what you hate in others is only that which you have not yet overcome in yourself. There are no heights of beauty, or greatness, or wisdom to which we cannot all aspire ; but if you would reach the heights, then you must be willing to go down into the depths. If you would stand beside the Perfect Man, and ask Him to recognise you as brother, then must you, in your turn, stand beside the prostitute, the outcast, and the criminal, and know them as yourself. The vision of God is the vision of the One amid the many, and as you serve the many so only can you find the One.

LECTURE IV

THE SPIRITUAL ORGANISATION  
OF A NATION

By C. JINARĀJADĀSA, M.A.

ONE of the greatest forces which is moulding civilisation to-day is Modern Science. We are being continually affected for good, and, I fear, also for evil, by some of nature's truths which our scientists are discovering for us. Taking the truths which inspire us to good, let me draw one to your attention, and that is the fundamental fact which is revealed to us in science that the universe is continually in a process of organisation. If there is one word which can sum up the gospel of science, it is "organisation".

But what does organisation mean, scientifically viewed? It means that a particle of matter specialises itself by a mysterious something called "life," and becomes different from the matter surrounding it. An atom, when once separated, lives on in that

separated condition. There are myriads of atoms in that isolated condition, but isolation is not organisation. Organisation then proceeds to group several atoms into a new system, such as a molecule or compound.

What has forced atoms to become a molecule or compound? Science cannot tell us. It is some new impulse which is born in the universe. Then, after long ages, when matter has existed as molecular compounds, another new impulse appears, and minerals are the result. Long ages after minerals have existed, another impulse appears, and there is a new type of organisation, when mineral substances are blended together, and out of them are built up vegetable organisms. Similarly, with the passing of time, there appears a new impulse, and we have the animal, and, in its own time, ages afterwards, the organisation of the human being.

These organisations are characterised by the fact that each successive type has a greater complexity. This complexity, which is greater in the molecule than in the atom, greater in the mineral than in the molecule, enables the organisation of new functions. So we find that, with each higher organism, new functions appear. Thus, to begin with the mineral, we find that the mineral expands and grows, but its growth is, as it were, in a blind fashion, seemingly the result only of a concourse of forces which it

cannot control. But when we come to the organisation of the vegetable, then there appears not only a greater complexity, but also a new function. In addition to all that characterises the mineral, we find in the vegetable a conscious adaptation, due to what might indeed be called rudimentary feeling. Pass on to the animal ; then in addition to the rudimentary feeling of the vegetable, rudimentary thought appears, and adaptation becomes more purposeful. When later we come to the highest organism which we know, that of man, in addition to instinct, feeling and thought, in man appears, again in rudimentary form, a new faculty, a new function, that of intuition. This intuition appears in the dim sense of a Whole, for man stands apart from the animal, in that he is capable of the recognition of a Deity or of a Purpose of which he is a unit or an agent. With that recognition, a rudimentary capacity is born for self-sacrifice for the Whole.

Always, then, organisation is the key-note of the universe as science shows it to us. In this process, we have new organisms ever appearing, and each type of organism is higher than its predecessor. When we survey this procession of organisms, we know that each phase of organisation releases more and more of something. What is it that is released ? On that great mystery science is utterly dumb. Science says organisation releases more and more

of life, but when we have said "life," we have not described it; we have merely put a label on a thing which we do not know how to describe. It is true that, if we go to Herbert Spencer, he will tell us that as we observe these varied developments of organisation, there is released, for instance in the animal, what is not found in the mineral, that is play. When we come to the higher organism of man, then culture is released; the arts, the sciences, the religions, all these come one after another as that indescribable Something, which is continually being released in the universe, organises Itself throughout the ages.

Now, Theosophy surveys the same facts as science, and it takes fully into account all scientific facts. But the conclusions of Theosophy often differ from those of science. The greatest contribution which Theosophy has to make to-day is to take all the facts of science, and present them to us from a new angle. The point of view which Theosophy gives to all thinking men and women is that all this organisation, which we can study with great fascination in the books of modern science, is a release, not merely of some blind force called "life," but of a self-conscious Divinity. Under that term "Divinity" much that is indescribable is contained. Idealism, tenderness, beauty, holiness, self-sacrifice, righteousness, justice, and

every other possible ideal are implied in the term "Divinity".

When the Theosophist says that the universe is releasing Divinity, he means that in every particle of matter, if only one knew how to look, all these ideals can be found ; that the process of life, which seems to the scientific vision merely a struggle for existence and a survival of the fittest, is not that ruthless war which crushes the individual, but a process of idealism which is steadily releasing beauty, tenderness, harmony and everything that man's heart longs for. In each particle of matter, there abides what all mystery teachings reveal to us as Divinity. For Divinity who has embodied Himself in the universe is organising Himself in it, and what we call the release of the highest possibilities of life is the mode of His organisation for the greater giving of Himself.

When, therefore, science shows us, in her books on Biology, Zoology, Physiology and Psychology complex and intricate processes of a mechanistic universe, we, from the Theosophical standpoint, see in them the modes of the giving of God. He gives Himself as the atom, and if a group of atoms, as they whirl, creates the light we see, that light is the gift of Himself by God to the universe. In the process of His organisation for a greater giving, He arranges Himself into molecules, and then into minerals ; diamonds, rubies and sapphires are forms of the gift



by God of Himself to man and the universe. So in every phase of life, in the atom and the molecule, in the mineral and vegetable, in the animal and in man, God is giving Himself, revealing, with each successive stage, more and more of His wondrous nature.

When we come to man, when we look at ourselves, then, though we may be steeped in sin and ignorance, yet marvellously and mysteriously, each one of us is the gift by God of Himself to the universe. So that, in very truth, we are the embodiments of God, and in each one of us is somewhere the Divine Majesty of God waiting to reveal Itself to the world. After having organised man, He still goes on organising Himself, with the purpose of a larger giving. Therefore men are organised to make the family, then families into the tribe, and tribes into the Nation. God gives Himself as each individual man, but a larger giving is possible when the family appears ; for the family becomes, as it were, a shrine through which He can reveal more of His Divinity. When in the course of civilisation the tribe appears, more can be given by God of His nature through the tribal functions. When finally the nation appears, then God can give to the world a yet greater revelation.

It is this which the President of the Society in her first lecture meant when she said, quoting the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, that a nation is an *Amsa* or a “ fragment ”

of God. To put it in different terms, a nation is as a cup or a shrine which contains or enshrines a manifestation of Divinity. A truth which is well known here in India, coming from the ancient Rshis, is that each one of us as the individualised soul enshrines the nature of God. But in these modern days, it may perhaps be a novel truth that, just as the individual enshrines the nature of God, so too does a nation. A strange thought this, that a nation is a spiritual entity ; that just as an organism composed of cells has a function different from that of the individual cells, so a nation, too, may have a function distinct in many ways from the functions of its individual citizens.

This thought of a nation as an Amsha of Divinity is, however, not new. It existed in Europe, in the thought during the Middle Ages, that behind the nation there stands a great angel of God guiding its destinies. The patron saint of England is St. George ; St. Patrick is for Ireland ; St. Andrew for Scotland and St. David for Wales ; and the French used to say that their patron saint was St. Denys. The same conception exists here to-day in India, especially with the Hindūs, when they think of India as Bhārat Mātā—Mother India. When the typical devotee of this Motherland, drawing his inspiration from Hindū culture, thinks of his national life, he thinks of his work as a sacrifice which he lays at the feet of the Mother ; all his dreams become like a glorification of Mother

India who enshrines in herself the nature of the indivisible Godhead.

We have thus the conception in Theosophy that a nation is a spiritual entity. A nation's organisation, on the hidden side of things, is of such a kind that the life of God which it offers to the world is such as cannot be offered through any one individual. If God could give all the greatness of Himself through individual man, why should He have been busy these incalculable ages in organising civilisation? It must only be because something can be given through a nation, through mankind as a whole, which cannot be given through individuals.

So then, we have a very striking thought as to what makes a nation. A nation is a spiritual organisation. As a nation appears on the scene, then, looked at from the higher standpoint, it appears only because it is needed in the great Plan of God. It is only because He, in the plan of giving more to the world, requires a particular people to function as a nation, that there appears in that people a consciousness of nationality, that mysterious something which is indescribable, which cannot be put down in a thesis, but can be partially sensed by the poet and the patriot, and which is embodied in those who live and die for the nation. A nation can appear in the great Plan only because it is wanted for the fulfilment of the divine Purpose.

To-day we find great nations are being born, one here in India, and another in China. Since 1914 when the War began, there are more nations on the map of Europe than there were before the War. To-day Finland is a nation, Ireland is a nation, Czechoslovakia is a nation, Poland is a nation, Albania is a nation, and so on. Why do nations come and go? They come because through a nation a gift is planned by God. If then a nation appears because it is wanted, it is obvious also that a nation disappears because it is no longer wanted. A nation being a spiritual entity lives only so long as it has its function to perform. One of the most striking illustrations of the way in which a nation persists, because it has some work to do, is the little nation of Poland. There was a time when Poland was a nation and had its own territory. Then in the passing of time, Poland was dismembered, a part was taken by Russia, a part by Germany, and a part by Austria; and Poland as a territory disappeared, but not Poland as a nation. Polish patriots dreamed, sacrificed, and continued to live for the nation. They died for their nation which had no territory, and generation after generation of them went on working for the nation as if it existed. Then in the course of time, Poland comes back again as a nation at the Treaty of Versailles, her territory now small in size but still the physical embodiment once again of the nation. Why has Poland, that was

dismembered, wiped off the map of Europe, come back again as a nation? Not by chance, but only because Poland has still some work to do. Though human forces for a while dispossessed Poland of its body, in that working of God's justice and of His Plan, that body comes back again to the nation.

The duration of a nation depends upon the work which it has to do, not upon anything else. Consider, for instance, one of the most striking nations the world had in the past, a little people, that of Greece. In the course of a hundred and fifty years the Greeks gave a message of philosophy, art, architecture and literature that is still dominating the culture of Europe. Within a hundred and fifty years it gave its message, and soon after the message was given, Greece lost her independence and ceased politically to be one nation. And look towards India. They say that over twenty foreign conquerors have swept over the face of this land, and that within the last twenty-five centuries only. Yet India remains fundamentally little changed in temperament, and her old institutions and her race characteristics are still here. Greece and Rome have passed away, and all we see of their past are mere mementos of things that have been, while India is still here living. Why? Surely, there can be only one reason, and that is, that in spite of all that India has yet given to the world, there remains something still which she has to

give both to the people of India and to the whole world.

So we have this fundamental principle, that nations come into being because they are wanted, nations persist because they have a work to do in the Divine Plan, and nations disappear when that work is accomplished. If nations come into existence to work in a Divine Plan, it is obvious from what I have said that a large territory is not specially necessary for a nation. Think of the little people of Athens, not more than 100,000 in number. Yet the glory of the sun which shone over Athens is still shedding its radiance over Europe. Think of the myriads who have lived in the mighty empire of Rome. Rome did her great work and then passed away as a mighty empire. But Athens was a little City State, and yet could do her work equally well. Therefore, we see that territory is not one of the essentials for a nation, in order to do its work successfully. Territory and military power are accidents of environment, and not the essence of national greatness. There is only one thing essential for a nation to become a successful nation; it is to do the work marked out for it in the Divine Plan. In weighing the greatness and usefulness of nations, we must not be deluded by questions of territory, armaments, empire, power and prestige, but be guided only by this sole question: Is the nation doing the work given to it in the Divine Plan?

After having presented to you this framework, as it were, of a great divine work in the world, let me now take up the problem of each individual nation. A nation, I have said, appears to carry out the Plan. Put in other words, a nation is a cup or chalice into which God can pour Himself, to give Himself through the nation to the world. But, in order to do this, He requires individuals, and therefore He selects the individuals who are to form the nation. When an individual is born in a nation, he does not come there by chance ; he is drafted into the nation. He is sent to the nation for two purposes, first to release the Divinity that is within him, and secondly to release the Divinity within the nation—two striking thoughts about the individual and the nation which Theosophy has to give to-day. That first thought is one which is easily developable out of all the traditions, both of Hinđuism and of Islām, nay, also out of the traditions of Christianity and of every religion, if only you will go to the most ancient days of those faiths. For man fundamentally has within him this mystery, that he can reveal the greatness of the Divine Nature. It may take long ages for him to do it, but every individual man enshrines the wonderful majesty and beauty of Ātmā. A man is born into a nation in order that, through the circumstances and the environment which the nation can give him of education and of occupation, he may release the Divinity within him.

A man or a woman appears in a nation, not merely for the purposes of his or her own self-revelation, not solely, as it were, to attain Moksha or personal liberation, but also to bring out the Divinity within the nation, in other words, to enable the divine gift to be given through the nation to the world.

I will take first the way that God organises nations so that individuals may release the Divinity within themselves. The clue to the method of organisation was given in ancient days by Manu Himself. Though He used words that are Samskrit—Brāhmaṇa, Kṣhatriya, Vaiśya and Shūdra—you will find that in every nation there are those four fundamental types of men. They are the producers, the distributors, the administrators and the instructors. Within these four main groups you can bring in all men and women who are born into a nation. Man is born as the producer—the manual labourer, the mechanic, the craftsman ; or as the distributor—the farmer, the merchant ; or as the administrator—the ruler, the defender, the state servant ; or as the fourth, the instructor—the priest, the teacher, the lawyer, the doctor, all professions coming generally under the division of the Brāhmaṇa or instructor.

All these are forms, then, in which individuals are to give themselves to a work, and thereby to release their Divinity. As we look at these fundamental types, we find that they are not all equal. The manual worker is not equal in capacity to, nor has he the same wide



range of service as, the teacher. But, however unequal in capacity the individuals within a nation may be, however different their functions, however much of inequality of culture there may be, there is one thing common to all, and that is an equality in offering. It is one of the wonderful secrets which a man discovers after he consecrates himself to the spiritual life, that spiritual life is not a matter of the kind of work which a man does, but of the spirit in which he does any work. That is why I say that the spirit of the function gives equality; and I do not know that I can express this ancient idea, which is in Hinduism, more beautifully than in those well known lines of George Herbert :

All may of Thee partake,  
Nothing can be so mean,  
Which with this tincture, for Thy sake,  
Will not grow bright and clean.

A servant, with this clause,  
Makes drudgery divine ;  
Who sweeps a room, as for Thy laws,  
Makes that and th' action fine.

It is a divine contribution which the King makes as he governs the people, but not less divine is the contribution of the scavenger or sweeper as he does that despised work, provided there is in him no grudging, no grumbling feeling that he is underpaid and mankind is ill-treating him, but rather a feeling, however dumb or dim, that he is giving his

contribution to the people's welfare, though his work is so small, and he is outcast by the people. It is only in the spirit of consecration that any equality at all is possible within a nation.

When a nation comes into being, then begins the great science of national organisation. For a nation can grow wrongly or rightly. What is the right way that a nation should be organised? I have said that an individual is born into the nation to release the Divinity in him; but how is he to do it? Very briefly, I may sum up the method by saying that it is by the exercise of three functions: they are Work, Worship and Play. By his work, by his worship, by his play, he will release the Divinity within him.

Let us examine very briefly how he is to release Divinity by his work. I am afraid this part of the subject is not easily understandable by us to-day, because most of the work that we know of is drudgery, that is, work which we do not want to do but are forced to do. But the time will come when, with a more perfected system of education, the educator, understanding the measure of capacity which each one of us brings from his past life, will see early, when we are children, what is the special occupation in which we should engage, so as to combine with our work a spirit of enthusiasm, the spirit of the giving of ourselves through work. That is not so to-day.

It is a curious thing that, though you may dislike your work as drudgery, you can find someone else to whom your work will be a source of enthusiasm. Unfortunately, in life to-day, square pegs are being forced into round holes. What is there so unpleasant to some of us as the mere drudgery of sweeping rooms and work of that sort? We want to be national heroes and all such kinds of things, but the other simple, little things are to us a drudgery. But we shall find certain souls to whom to do simple actions of service is to release in them a sense of joy. One of the characteristics you will find among the negroes of America is that when they are waiters, they take a delight in you, they smile on you as you eat, they want to see that everything nice is provided for you, that you are contented; they feel a sense of enjoyment in seeing you having such an enjoyable time. There we have the real spirit of the waiter.

Many a person who, you think, works grudgingly, can be made to understand the joy of service, provided you can give him the right kind of work to do. The other day a French writer described what still exists in France concerning the attitude of the typical French workman towards his work. "In France the workman likes to understand what he is doing. When his job is done, he likes to look at it, passes his hand over it, as though caressing it, and

to think : 'It is not for the boss that I do this, it is for myself, for my contentment, for my pleasure, for my dignity.' He does not want your American 'efficiency' methods." There we have a little indication of the real spirit which we need to bring into work.

We have not got it now, that is quite true ; and that is why in the nations there is so much suffering, so much friction, so much ignorance, because nations are organised, yes, but so little rightly and so much wrongly. That is why we Theosophists are talking to you about these things. People imagine that in Theosophical lectures we ought to be answering questions about Parabrahman, the Absolute. We believe so much in Parabrahman as everywhere, that we are going to make every little particle of matter a reflection of Parabrahman. That is why, as you watch the development of the Theosophical Movement, you will find question after question, topic after topic of human welfare taken up. Nothing could be more characteristic of our Theosophical work to-day than this series of lectures here. For a nation is as sacred a place of worship, of study, as a temple or a scripture. And therefore, since we believe so profoundly in the spirit of God in man, we desire to understand the manifestations of that Divinity not only as It is worshipped in the temple, but also as It works in the workshop. A time will come

when, in the light of this truth, the nation will organise to bring out the spirit of enthusiasm for work in each individual. Then the schools and the occupations will all be reorganised, and there will be a new evaluation of the individual, that each man must have the work that he can best do, and that he can only do that best for which he feels the greatest enthusiasm.

There is also the second function, and that is of worship. How shall we worship? What is worship, fundamentally? Fundamentally, worship is a matter of re-consecrating oneself. Worship is not a matter of the prayers we say, it is not a matter of ceremonial actions. Fundamentally, our religion is that which takes us out of ourselves, makes us die to ourselves, in order that we may be born anew to consecrate ourselves again to work after a more beautiful model. But what is that model? To work in harmony with the spirit of consecration of the Divine Worker. If we can think of the Divine Work as proceeding according to a Divine Plan, that is, as being mapped out beforehand and then as following a course which leads to Idealism, then the true worship of an individual is his consulting the Divine Plan. How can he do that? As a ship is steered; the helmsman swings the rudder which controls the direction, but he must ever keep his eye on the compass, a tiny piece of metal, but so subtle in its composition that always it points undeviatingly

to a magnetic north. In the same way is man's true religion. A man's true religion is that which brings out of himself a spirit of consecration to do everything good in life. Whether he believes in a personal or an impersonal God, or in no God at all, whether he be a theist, or an atheist, or a pantheist, or whether he has no belief at all, except the mere love of mankind, or a loyalty to a work, are minor matters of method, so long as the root of the matter is in him, which is the determination to re-consecrate himself each day.

I come now to the function of play. What is play? Play is described by a word which we constantly use, but whose inmost signification escapes us. We say play is recreation. Now recreation is *re-creation*—the creating again of ourselves. God created us once, and then He leaves us to create ourselves again and again, and play is the way of re-creating ourselves.

I use the word "play," because it is the best that I can find. If I were more metaphysical, I would use the word "art". For what is art but a way of re-creating ourselves? What is a poem but the re-creating of my emotion and giving it an external form which is beautiful—for myself chiefly, it may be, or for others if it is worthy of their admiration? What is your day-dream but a re-creation of yourself? What does a child at play do but re-create himself on a happier mould? All the time, life should be a re-creation.

But unhappily, how many of us can write poems, or sing, or compose? How many of us are there who can sympathise, that is, "feel with," a sunset, or, standing before a mountain range or a waterfall, see visions? We do not know how to create ourselves again by the aid of these things, and the finest message of life passes us by. But when there is a Right Nation—that means Right Education, Right Occupation, Right Recreation—then there will be the right kind of play, and the day will come then when, with right worship, right play and right work, man will release the Divinity within him.

While man, the individual, releases the Divinity within him in these ways, the nation, too, as a nation, has to release the Divinity within the nation. This is only possible by the nation first realising a sense of unity. I have said that within the nation there must be inequality—inequality of capacities, differences of functions, varieties of work. But I also said that it is possible to bring about equality by a spirit of consecration. In addition to that, it is possible to bring about a wonderful unity within a nation provided we develop a sense of Brotherhood. Every great religion attempts to bring about Brotherhood, and each religion is to be judged of its value for mankind in so far as it promotes, or is apathetic to, Brotherhood. One people may have long existed as a nation, merely as a political organism, but without

Brotherhood prevailing, and then true religion will not there be found, while another people not professing, it may be, any particular religion yet legislating for Brotherhood, will have the essence of a true religious life. The unity which is necessary for a nation can only come through Brotherhood, and that is why a nation can come to its climax of beauty, only when the great Theosophical principles of Brotherhood are understood and applied.

Such then is the striking purpose which underlies the work of Theosophists within each nation. We may differ regarding the value of political parties ; we may be of different social grades and creeds ; but we are united in one thing, it is that in order that there may be a righteous nation we must minimise our differences and work up and intensify the sense of Brotherhood. I do not know that I can give you our great ideal more clearly than in certain words of the American socialist Debs. Debs is a man who has been sent to prison for his convictions, I do not know how many times, who has been dubbed a Bolshevist. But he has said one of the finest things I know as to Brotherhood. "So long as there is a poorer class, I belong to it. So long as there is a criminal class, I am of it. So long as there is one soul in jail, I am not free." That is our ideal of Brotherhood, and it is only as that kind of thought spreads within a nation, and all men, whether at the top or at the bottom of the



nation, feel a sense of unity, that the nation can reveal its Divinity. We must release the Divinity within the individual by giving him every opportunity to work, to worship and to play ; we must release the Divinity in the nation by building up the sense of unity.

I pass now from this problem of one nation to all nations, because what I have said about one nation is true of every nation. All nations are wanted in the Divine Plan, and that is not an easy thing for us to perceive. It is easy to be enthusiastic about one's own nation. But unfortunately, in these days, nationalism implies a certain amount of apathy towards, if not hatred of, other nations. " Unfortunately " I say, and " in these days " ; but a time will come when we shall understand that every nation is needed in the Divine Plan, and that one type of true nationalism cannot by any possibility or means ever clash with true nationalism of another kind. Let me take the two streams of nationalism which exist here in India, the Hindū and the Muhammadan. Note how the subtle differences between these two are in reality complementary one to the other. What is the chief and the most striking characteristic of Hindū civilisation ? It is the quality of Subjectivity which marks the real Hindū temperament. We are drawn more to the idea and less to the form. Look, for instance, at Hindū art, and take as typical of Hindū

art Hindū sculpture. In Hindū sculpture, there is no attempt to be "true to nature". The artist does not look at "nature" as he is moulding a statue. He has certainly observed nature, but he does not work from nature. He is subjective in his attitude. He is not aiming to give you the form of the thing "as it is"; he wants to suggest to you an idea. Note how Hindū sculptors always prefer granite, the hard substance, and not marble, the soft substance. A vigour of idealism is manifest as the Hindū sculptor uses his tools against the hardest substance which he can find. He is trying to reveal the indescribable, the unrevealable Idea of the Divine through his sculpture. That is his aim. Therefore there is a subtlety in Hindū sculpture, which has to be studied in order to gain from it all the vigour that is there.

But now turn to Islām. What is the characteristic of Islām? It is Objectivity. Except with the Sūfis, who are mystics, the Muhammadans delight greatly in the outer manifestations of life. Banquets and social intercourse, songs, beautiful gardens, beautiful buildings, all sensuous delights become inseparable parts in the development of Islāmic civilisation. The Muslim artist, when he works, uses the soft marble, because he wants to be "true to nature". He is ever observing and depicting the shape of the flower, the movement of the animal. He is exquisite; he is all

the time developing rhythm and beauty, that which he sees in nature. In other words, grace and delicacy are his gifts through art. The subtlety of the Hindū, the delicacy of the Muhammadan—are these two contradictory one of another? Can we not see how both can be blended? In the past in certain periods, they were so blended, and some generations ago there were times when Hindūs and Muhammadans side by side entered into a common consciousness. Muslim architects planned the Mughal tombs, but Hindu craftsmen built them. What would either, without the other, have created?

Think of the Briton in India. Just now we have certain political skirmishes with him, but some of us know that there is one precious quality which he has to give to us, something which both the Hindū and the Muhammadan need. That is the Briton's ability to "muddle through". Remember, he does muddle through. We do not care to muddle at all. We plan to create perfection, and while we are working at Constitutions, and visualising difficulties ahead of us, and work everything out in detail for every contingency to the end of time, the Briton, that is, the unimaginative practical objective-minded man who trusts in himself, simply says: "Let us get together, we'll muddle through somehow." It is uncomfortable to some people, especially for those who have to suffer, this art of muddling through, but it

is a precious gift nevertheless to get to grips with difficulties at once and muddle through somehow. If we learn that lesson from the Briton, I do believe that one of these days we in India will make a really great nation. It will be made not only by the subjective strength of the Hindū, or the objective delicacy of the Muhammadan, but also by the practical outlook and pluck of the Briton. •

Look at other nations as well. The sensitiveness to ideas of the Italian is one of the most precious elements of Europe. Think of the clarity of expression of the French mind. What of that remarkable characteristic of the American, his utter impatience of any tradition which is more than a generation old? All these are needed in the development of humanity. If I had more knowledge of all the nations, I could show you how every nation in the world is needed in the development of the Great Plan.

My purpose has been to show you that there is a hidden organisation of a nation and that it is always a spiritual work. For, there is, when all is said and done, only one Worker. Call Him if you will Īshvara, God or Allah, but let us call Him for the moment by a new name, "The Worker". Then, if I am a good worker, I am for the time being a channel of that one Supreme and Ideal Worker. He knows how to work; He knows how to worship and how to play. The universe is His work; the universe

is His worship ; the universe is His Līlā or play. He has sent each to be born in a nation, He has given each an occupation. He has organised humanity into many nations. All that has a meaning, if only we understand. And what is the meaning ? Its meaning is so to get together, so to understand the methods of His work, that we can organise the life within our nation in such a way that to work is to worship, and to play is to work, till each man will live a fulness of himself as he reveals the Divinity within him, and co-operates with all to reveal the Divinity in the nation.

Each one of us, then, can begin life to-morrow in a new spirit, and that spirit is given to us in inspiring words by a poet of England. Blake had a keen sense that there was taking place, unseen, a divine organisation of all life, and that hovering over the people of England a heavenly Jerusalem was waiting to descend. He looked at England, at the misery and degradation of her masses, and he cried out pledging himself and calling on others to take the same pledge :

Bring me my bow of burning gold !  
Bring me my arrows of desire !  
Bring me my spear ! O clouds unfold !  
Bring me my chariot of fire !

I will not cease from mental fight,  
Nor shall the sword sleep in my hand,  
Till we have built Jerusalem  
In England's green and pleasant land.

That is the only gospel for the noble man and woman of to-day—not to stand apart from a nation's life because, for the moment, it is full of fractiousness, because it is full of unpleasantness, but rather to look for the building of the nation by the divine worker, God Himself. What else can we do if our eyes are not blind and our hearts not dead, but throw ourselves, following our judgment, along whatever ways we think will rouse in us the highest enthusiasm, so as to become one with the life of the nation, to consecrate ourselves to the working of the Great Plan?

Then we shall find a wonderful mystery in life, and there will soon arise the vision of a greater thing than the nation, and that is Humanity. A wonderful thing it is to discover the beauty and the idealism of one's nation, for the nation is a fragment of God. But when you have discovered that fragment of God, then comes the greater wonder still, and that is to see the larger fragment of God, which is Mankind. Whoso will understand these mysteries, and live in a spirit of idealism and sacrifice, shall come to discover that great wonder which is Humanity, for the love of individual man leads to the love of the nation, and the love of the nation inevitably leads to the love of Humanity.

Step by step, by the tasks which are given to him to-day, man can climb the great stairway to God, till he knows that he is himself the Worker and the Work, that the universe is an embodiment not only of God

but of himself also, that in all time, in all space, there is One and One only, without a Second. To know God as yourself—God as the worker, God as the injurer, God as the sufferer, God as the ruler, God as the subject—it is to discover these things that men have toiled and suffered; it is to give this message that India still lives unto this day. Learn it, my brothers; Muslim, Hindū, Pārsī, Briton, it does not matter what you call yourselves. Within the borders of this ancient Motherland, you can discover all the wonders which God has for you, if you will train yourself to give yourself to the Nation, and through the Nation to all Mankind.





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